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the preceding months. What George Sand said in her *Journal d'un Voyageur* of the camp of Nevers might, with equal justice, have been predicated concerning all other chances of succor or means of aid. "It had but one defect, namely, that it did not exist." The estimate formed by the Besieged Resident of the male population of Paris is not a high one. "It has done little more than bluster and drink and brag." And when the inevitable capitulation came, it quietly succumbed. It was not, however, until the 9th of February that the Besieged Resident left Paris, to be "restored to the society of his relatives, who," he tells us, "are honest, but humble." We have said enough to show that his book is full of pleasant writing, while the light thrown upon the character of Trochu gives it a real value. The most severe of critics would be obliged to own that *se non è vero, è ben trovato*.

6. — *Second Report of the Massachusetts State Board of Health.*
1870 - 1871.

THERE has lately been published by the Massachusetts State Board of Health a volume of the greatest interest and importance to every citizen of the Commonwealth. This commission is composed of seven gentlemen, five of whom are business men of distinguished energy and public spirit, and the remaining two are eminent medical men of Boston. These gentlemen have for several years made a special study of the causes of disease in this State, and especially of such causes as are constantly exerting their deleterious influence in its cities and towns.

They have spared no effort to discover which among these various causes are preventable, and what are the surest means of effecting such prevention when possible.

In the volume before us, their annual report, for which the public is mainly indebted to the untiring zeal and efficiency of the secretary, Dr. George Derby, they have set forth the result of their investigations in the most graphic and powerful manner. Not only to the professional reader, but especially to every parent, and, indeed, to every man and woman who has any interest in the welfare of their families, friends, and fellow-citizens, this book is not only entertaining, but of infinite value. Full and reliable information is given regarding the prevalence of different diseases in the various parts of the State, with the most able consideration of their causes, and the means of controlling or eradicating the same. The influence of situation, soil, and drainage, that of food and drink, and the method of water supply, are ably discussed. The effects of various manufactures and occupations, and of

the use of alcoholic stimulation, are treated of with great care, not upon theoretical grounds, but with conclusions based upon facts collected with diligence and discrimination. There is special and minute consideration of the more urgent dangers to which every increasing community is annually more exposed. Conspicuous among the latter is the irresponsible and frequently infamous manner in which food, especially fresh meat and milk, is selected, prepared, and furnished to the public. Recent developments regarding the slaughtering of cattle at Brighton, and the subsequent preparation and final sale in market, of beef so diseased that the slaughterers sickened and died from inoculation, show how entirely we are at the mercy of the avarice or neglect of the dealers, and how well founded is the appeal of the Health Board that some system of public inspection, and restriction regarding animals slain for food, be adopted. The very fact that the effect of consumption of diseased meat does not take the form of a definite disease only renders the danger greater, in so far as its detection is the more difficult, and, from this circumstance, families, neighborhoods, or indeed whole communities may become infected, and yet the supply and consumption remain of the same character. This applies with especial force to children, whose organizations, being more delicate, yield the more readily to such causes of deterioration, and whose nourishment is derived either directly from the mother, whose secretions have been tainted by unwholesome food, or from the milk of cows whose diseased condition is not shown in the milk itself, but no less surely carries the cause of deterioration into the system of the child, prevents its development, and renders it an easy victim to any ordinary attack of disease.

The difficulty of discrimination by the buyer is shown especially in the case of pork, whether fresh, or in the form of ham, bacon, or sausages. Any of these articles may present to the eye every evidence of excellent quality, and yet hold within their tissues those microscopical parasites which, when taken into the stomach and warmed into vitality, penetrate the intestinal walls, spread through the muscular system, and thence, with almost indefinite multiplication, pursue their work of destruction, until, after months of bodily suffering and mental depression, either death comes as a welcome deliverance, or a protracted convalescence slowly restores the victim of the neglect of well-known facts. Dr. Derby's admirable paper on the history of this disease, trichiniasis, in Massachusetts, closes with the statement of the well-attested fact, that thorough cooking destroys the infecting power of trichinous pork.

It is to the establishment and proper management of abattoirs that we must look for the correction of these evils, and we would earnestly

appeal to all citizens to support the board in their present efforts to achieve this reform. A few years since these evils were far more in New York than they are to-day in Boston. The abattoir system was proposed, but was resisted to the utmost by the butchers and cattle-dealers. The Health Board of that State, failing to convince these persons by reason, prohibited the continuance, after a certain date, of the private and irresponsible slaughter of animals for the market. At once the bureau was besieged by the cattle and meat dealers, full of anxious and plausible arguments, and protesting against an order the enforcement of which would, they said, bring a famine upon the city. The Health Board hardly feared that so rich a market as New York would want for meat, while the Jersey cattle-pens were only across the river, and communication with the West remained unimpeded. They stood by their order. The private slaughter-houses were closed. Then it appeared that their owners, foreseeing the inevitable result, had meantime formed companies, had established abattoirs in conformity with the regulations of the board, and they now continued the supply of meat not only with greater ease, but with greater profit, though with no higher prices than before. The change had been peaceably and permanently effected. In a large, airy, well-disciplined abattoir, fitted with appliances for the immediate utilization of refuse, under the management of a responsible company, and constantly open to police inspection, nuisances have no existence, and the possibility of diseased meat being offered in market is reduced to the minimum.

A portion of the report before us, which will be found especially entertaining to the general reader, is the communication of Dr. Bowditch, regarding the dwellings and methods of life among the more degraded and criminal classes in the city of Boston, the origin of disease, and deterioration of public health and morality in consequence of the surroundings and habits of these classes. He compares these conditions with similar ones of cause and effect in the city of London. While temporarily residing in the latter city during the past year he made a personal inspection of those districts where crime and squalor have for so many years found a home, and after his return made a similar inspection in Boston. The following is an extract from his narrative:—

“ . . . Stoop with us, and crawl cat-like down this dark cellar-way, and see a *home* in Boston! This cellar room is scarcely high enough for us to stand erect. One can easily almost touch each of the four sides while standing in the centre of it. The floor is dark, dirty, and broken; apparently wet also, possibly from the tide oozing up. Two women are there, commonly, yet rather tawdrily dressed, and doing nothing but apparently waiting, spider-like,

for some unlucky, erring insect to be caught in their dusty but strong meshes. Tubs, tables, bedclothes, and chinaware are huddled incongruously together. Our guide strikes a match by the stove, and then opens a door into a so-called bedroom. It is a *box* just large enough to hold a double bed. No window is in it, no means of ventilation, save through the common room up the cellar steps. The bed is of straw, covered only by a dirty blanket. Everywhere is the picture of loathsome filth. The stench, too, of the premises is horrible, owing to long-accumulated dirt, and from the belching up of effluvia from solutions of dark mud, reeking with sewage-water from the city drains and water-closets. It is difficult for us to breathe in the tainted atmosphere. We feel ourselves enveloped in a physical atmosphere most horrible, and a moral one most degraded. We glance into another 'bedroom!' opening by another door into this common room. It is a facsimile of its neighbor. Upon the dirty blanket lie recently washed and finely starched wrist-cuffs, and the jaunty modern hat and feather now worn by all. The strange contrast between fashionable neatness and exterior proprieties of appearance with extreme nastiness was never more strongly manifested. 'How much do you pay for these rooms?' we asked as we turned to leave. 'Four dollars a week!'

"I saw no worse home in Whitechapel. I even doubt whether any so bad can exist under English law. And this was not a solitary example. We visited several of the same type. If any faith can be put in the idea of an overruling, retribution-paying justice; if any confidence can be placed in all the deductions of modern sanitary science, Boston will some time suffer the heaviest of penalties for its great guilt in these matters. Nay, is it not even now suffering the direst of calamities in the deleterious influences exerted upon every child born within such dens?

"My indignation is excited to think that the city authorities allow even one such tenement to remain to taint the atmosphere, both physically and morally, of the whole neighborhood, especially when we have laws stringent enough to abate this and many more similar nuisances that are scattered here and there in Boston. More especially am I indignant to think that some of these houses are at times owned by men living in luxury, in our most fashionable places, men moving in political power, nay, men of irreproachable religious *appearances*, who talk of Christianity, and perhaps listen with becoming gravity to the beautiful teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, Sunday after Sunday. . . ."

It is a quite general belief that such conditions as are here described attach inevitably to great cities, and that, so long as they are kept within certain geographical bounds, the remainder of the population is not affected by them. This is a fatal mistake. Every medical man of experience and observation knows how constantly the miasm of fever and the exhalations from other diseases emanate from these sources, and are daily disseminated over the city, while every few years occurs an outbreak of epidemic, which has here found a congenial soil, and which reaches far into homes of fancied security for its victims.

Where lies the way out of these difficulties? To us these very pages seem to indicate it, namely, in the extension of the powers and duties of this Health Board, so that in another year they shall not only continue their work of investigation of the causes of disease, but shall also commence that of eradication. This is no impracticable scheme. It has been successfully tried in other parts of the country.

Six years ago the terrible news of the approach of cholera frightened the legislature of New York into the passage of a health bill, which led, among other things, to the enforcement of measures for the correction of the very abuses which the report before us most conspicuously calls attention to in Massachusetts.

When the determination to improve the dwellings of the poor and the vicious, and to ameliorate the condition of their inmates, was first expressed, it was at best smiled at as utopian. It was, however, firmly, persistently, and successfully carried out. It was found that the periodical cleansing of tenement-houses, the improvement in their means of light and ventilation, and the adequate provision for personal cleanliness and privacy, did reach the moral nature of the tenants, did stimulate their ambition, and did make them in every way more decent. This was due quite as much to improved and constant discipline as to improved construction. The most wisely and liberally constructed tenement-house may soon be ruined by the filth and wantonness of the tenants, if not looked after. The work is one of untiring diligence and frequent repetition, but it can be done. A tenement-house, once put in good condition, can be kept so, if only the owner or his agent inspects it frequently, say once a week, and compels each tenant, on pain of ejection, to keep his quarters clean. With a reasonable exercise of patience and encouragement, but a short time is required to establish the habit. The tenants soon learn that neglect on the part of one of their number reflects discredit and brings discomfort upon all, and join effectually in his condemnation; while each fresh inmate falls naturally, more or less, into the customs of the house.

Experience in New York proved beyond a doubt the truth of Dr. Bowditch's position, that the responsibility for the filth, disease, and degradation that is proverbial in tenement-houses lies at the door of the owners. The owners failing in their duty, the responsibility reverts to the public authorities, whose duty it is to enforce upon these owners the requirements of the tenement-house law. Unhappily, the municipal authorities have miserably failed.

Strangely enough, Massachusetts, so generally in the front rank of improvement, is most disgracefully in the rear as regards care for

the health of her citizens. To care for them when actually sick, her public treasury and her private purses are open with a lavish liberality; but to keep them well, to give to their children fresh air, a decent habitation, and a reasonable protection from disease, she somehow, by some strange obliquity, does not consider her duty. The constituted authorities, especially in her proudest city, have been most urgently appealed to by their own medical counsel, men in whose wisdom and integrity they had entire confidence, but they disregarded their appeals, and calmly saw them, mortified and disappointed, turn from their labors, which, sadly as it sounds, they had found utterly unavailing.

Self-preservation, no less than humanity, points to the State Board of Health as the only reliance under these circumstances. That they will display the same judgment and efficiency in removing that they have in detecting the causes of danger we have no doubt.

7. — *Curiosities of the Law Reporters.* By FRANKLIN FISKE HEARD.
Boston: Lee and Shepard. 1871.

THIS entertaining little book contains many of the stories which have amused successive generations of lawyers, traced to their sources. We know of no other such collection, for though Mr. Wallace has given some specimens of the quaint style of the old reporters, they are merely thrown in by the way; and some very modern cases cited by Mr. Heard are equally good. Witness the remark on Reid's case, the first in the book: "Reid and McGuire were both victims of the same accident, which, though melancholy, has settled the law." Some of the best known anecdotes, however, do not seem to be authenticated; for instance, the following, which is too good not to be true: "A searcher after something or other, running his eye down the index of a law book through letter B, arrived at the reference, 'Best, Mr. Justice, his great mind.' Desiring to be better acquainted with the particulars of this assertion, he turned to the page referred to and there found, to his entire satisfaction, 'Mr. Justice Best said he had a great mind to commit the witness for prevarication.'" This specimen of index-making is almost equalled by that in the last English edition of Smith's *Leading Cases*: "EAGLE'S EYES — Court will not always look with."

The book does not, of course, pretend to completeness, and there are some notable omissions. A curious case, not given by Mr. Heard, is that in which an ecclesiastical chancellor, Archbishop Morton, threatened a defendant with punishment in the next world, as the common